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Commission on the Status of Women
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Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century"

Namibia:* draft resolution

Women, the girl child and HIV and AIDS

The Commission on the Status of Women,

Reaffirming the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,[1] the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly,[2] the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development,[3] the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS[4] and the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS,[5] the HIV/AIDS-related goals contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration of 2000[6] and the Millennium Development Goals, in particular the aim of Member States to have halted, by 2015, and begun to reverse, the spread of HIV and AIDS, as well as the commitments on HIV/AIDS made at the 2005 World Summit,

Welcoming the in-depth study of the Secretary-General on all forms of violence against women,[7] and taking note of the recommendations contained therein,

* On behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Southern African Development Community.

[1] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

[2] General Assembly resolutions S-23/2, annex, and resolution S-23/3, annex.

[3] See *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[4] General Assembly resolution S-26/2, annex.

[5] Resolution 60/262, annex.

[6] See General Assembly resolution 55/2.

[7] A/61/122 and Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1.

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Taking note of the outcome of the 2008 high-level meeting on HIV/AIDS,

Welcoming the initiative taken by the Secretary-General on 25 February 2008 to launch a multi-year campaign to end violence against women,

Recalling all previous resolutions on this subject,

Reaffirming that prevention, care, support and treatment for those infected and affected by HIV and AIDS are mutually reinforcing elements of an effective response that must be integrated into a comprehensive approach to combat the epidemic, and recognizing the need to ensure the respect, protection and fulfilment of human rights in the context of HIV and AIDS,

Recognizing that populations destabilized by armed conflict, humanitarian emergencies and natural disasters, including refugees, internally displaced persons and, in particular, women and children, are at an increased risk of exposure to HIV infection,

Deeply concerned that the global HIV/AIDS pandemic disproportionately affects women and girls and that the majority of new HIV infections occur among young people,

Deeply concerned also by the increased risk of HIV/AIDS facing women and girls with disabilities resulting from, inter alia, social, legal and economic inequalities, sexual and gender-based violence, discrimination and violations of their rights,

Concerned that the vulnerability of women and girls to HIV and AIDS is increased by their unequal legal, economic and social status, including poverty as well as other cultural and physiological factors, violence against women and girls and adolescents, early marriage, forced marriage, premature and early sexual relations, commercial sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation,

Also concerned that HIV infection rates are at least twice as high among young people, especially young and married women, who do not finish primary school as among those who do,

Further concerned that women and girls are more vulnerable to HIV and AIDS and have different and unequal access to the use of health resources for the prevention and treatment of and care and support for people living with HIV and AIDS,

Stressing with deep concern that the HIV/AIDS pandemic, with its devastating scale and impact on women and girls, requires urgent action in all fields and at all levels,

Stressing that gender equality and the political, social and economic empowerment of women and girls are fundamental elements in the reduction of their vulnerability to HIV and AIDS and are essential to reversing the pandemic,

Expressing its concern that the HIV/AIDS pandemic reinforces gender inequalities, that women and girls are disproportionately affected by the HIV and AIDS crisis, that they are more easily infected, that they bear the disproportionate burden of caring for and supporting those infected and affected by the disease and that they become more vulnerable to poverty as a result of the HIV and AIDS crisis,

1. *Welcomes* the report of the Secretary-General on women, the girl child and HIV/AIDS;[8]

2. *Reaffirms* the need for Governments, supported by the relevant actors, including civil society and the private sector, to intensify national efforts and international cooperation in the implementation of the commitments contained in the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS,[4] the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS,[5] the Beijing Platform for Action[9] and the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development;[3]

3. *Also reaffirms* the commitment to scale up towards universal access to reproductive health by 2015, as set out in the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, integrating this goal into strategies to attain internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration[6] aimed at reducing maternal mortality, improving maternal health, reducing child mortality, promoting gender equality, combating HIV/AIDS and eradicating poverty;

4. *Further reaffirms* the commitment to achieve universal access to comprehensive HIV prevention programmes, treatment, care and support by 2010, as set out in the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS;

5. *Stresses* the need to significantly increase and coordinate political and financial commitment to address gender equality and equity in national HIV and AIDS responses, and urges Governments to work towards effectively reflecting in their national policies, strategies and budgets the gender dimension of the pandemic, in line with the time-bound goals of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS, the Beijing Platform for Action and the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS;

6. *Urges* Governments to take all necessary measures to create an enabling environment for the empowerment of women and girls, to strengthen their economic independence and their right to property and inheritance, and to protect and promote their full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms in order to enable them to protect themselves from HIV infection;

7. *Urges* Governments and other relevant stakeholders to address the challenges faced by older women in accessing HIV prevention, treatment, care and support as well as in caring for people living with or affected by HIV and AIDS, including orphaned grandchildren;

8. *Also urges* Governments and other relevant stakeholders to address the increased risk of HIV/AIDS facing women and girls with disabilities, ensuring their equal access to prevention, treatment, care and support, as an integral part of their HIV and AIDS response;

9. *Emphasizes* the need to strengthen policy and programme linkages and coordination between HIV and AIDS and sexual and reproductive health, and their inclusion in national development plans, including poverty reduction strategies and sector-wide approaches, where they exist, as a necessary strategy for fighting the HIV/AIDS pandemic and mitigating its impact on the population, which could result in more relevant and cost-effective interventions with greater impact;

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[8] E/CN.6/2009/6.

[9] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

10. *Urges* Governments to strengthen initiatives that would increase the capacities of women and adolescent girls to protect themselves from the risk of HIV infection, principally through the provision of health care and health services, including for sexual and reproductive health, in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, and that integrate HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, care and support and include voluntary counselling and testing, including through prevention education that promotes gender equality within a culturally and gender-sensitive framework;

11. *Urges* Governments and other relevant stakeholders to address the situation faced by girls caring for people living with or affected by HIV/AIDS, who are often forced to drop out of school;

12. *Also urges* Governments to ensure accessible and affordable procurement of prevention commodities, in particular male and female condoms, to ensure that their supply is adequate and secure, as well as to promote the ongoing research for safe and effective microbicides;

13. *Reminds* States to consider that flexibilities in trade-related intellectual property rights can be used by States, when necessary, to protect public health and address public health crises;

14. *Urges* Governments to strengthen legal, policy, administrative and other measures for the prevention and elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls, including harmful traditional and customary practices, female genital mutilation, abuse, early marriage and forced marriage, rape, including marital rape, and other forms of sexual violence, battering and trafficking in women and girls, and to ensure that violence against women is addressed as an integral part of the national HIV and AIDS response;

15. *Also urges* Governments, where they have not yet done so, to institute and ensure the enforcement of laws to protect women and girls from early and forced marriage and marital rape;

16. *Further urges* Governments to prioritize and expand access to treatment for all people in all settings, in a progressive and sustainable manner, including the prevention and treatment of opportunistic infections and other HIV-related diseases and the effective use of and adherence to antiretroviral medication, including through access to clinical and laboratory testing and post-exposure prophylaxis, and to promote access to affordable, high-quality, safe and effective drugs and related pharmaceutical products, in particular for women and girls;

17. *Urges* Governments to ensure that women and girls have equitable and sustained access to treatment for HIV/AIDS and opportunistic infections and other HIV-related diseases, appropriate to their age, health and nutritional status, with the full protection of their human rights, including their reproductive rights and sexual health, in accordance with, inter alia, the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the Beijing Platform for Action and other relevant international human rights instruments, and to protection from coerced sexual activity, and to monitor access to treatment by age, sex, marital status and continuity of care;

18. *Requests* Governments to promote and provide equal and equitable access for women and men throughout their life cycle to social services related to

health care, including education, clean water and safe sanitation, nutrition, food security and health, education programmes and social protection schemes, especially for women and girls living with or affected by HIV/AIDS, including treatment for opportunistic infections and other HIV-related diseases;

19. *Calls upon* Governments to intensify efforts to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and girls in relation to HIV/AIDS, including through challenging gender stereotypes, stigmatization, discriminatory attitudes and gender inequalities, and to encourage the active involvement of men and boys in this regard;

20. *Stresses* that women should be empowered to protect themselves against violence and that, in this regard, women have the right to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, including their sexual and reproductive health, free of coercion, discrimination and violence;

21. *Calls upon* all Governments and the international donor community to integrate a gender perspective in all matters of international assistance and cooperation and to take measures to ensure that resources concomitant with the impact of HIV/AIDS on women and girls are made available, in particular in funding provided to national HIV and AIDS programmes to promote and protect the human rights of women and girls in the context of the epidemic, to promote economic opportunities for women, including to diminish their financial vulnerability and their risk of exposure to HIV, and to achieve the gender-related goals found, inter alia, in the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS;

22. *Calls upon* Governments to integrate HIV prevention, voluntary counselling and voluntary testing of HIV into other health services, including sexual and reproductive health, family planning, maternity and tuberculosis services, as well as the provision of services for the prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted infections in the mother-to-child transmission services for pregnant women infected by HIV;

23. *Encourages* the continued collaboration among the Secretariat and co-sponsors of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and other international organizations in order to continue to scale up efforts to reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections, in particular in the context of emergency situations and as part of humanitarian efforts, and to seek actively the achievement of results for women and girls, and also encourages the integration of the mainstreaming of a gender perspective throughout their work;

24. *Welcomes* the decision of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria to scale up a gender-sensitive response to HIV and AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria in order to address the vulnerabilities of women and girls to HIV infection;

25. *Requests* the Secretariat and co-sponsors of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and other United Nations agencies responding to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, including the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, to mainstream a gender and human rights perspective throughout their HIV- and AIDS-related operations, including policy, planning, monitoring and evaluation, and to ensure that programmes and policies are developed and adequately resourced to address the specific needs of women and girls;

26. *Encourages* the United Nations to continue to support national monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in the context of the "three ones" principles, to enable the production and dissemination of comprehensive and timely information on the gender dimension of the pandemic, including through the collection of data disaggregated by sex, age and marital status, and to raise awareness about the critical intersection between gender inequality and HIV and AIDS;

27. *Requests* the Secretary-General to invite Member States to work in partnership with the Global Coalition on Women and HIV/AIDS, convened by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and its partners, to mobilize and support a wide range of national actors, including women's groups and networks of women living with HIV, in order to ensure that national HIV and AIDS programmes are better able to respond to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of women, girls and adolescents;

28. *Urges* Governments to rapidly scale up access to treatment programmes to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV and to encourage men to participate with women in programmes designed to prevent mother-to-child transmission, to encourage women and girls to participate in those programmes and to provide sustained treatment and care for the mother after pregnancy, including care and support for the family;

29. *Encourages* the design and implementation of programmes, including awareness-raising programmes, to encourage and enable men, including young men, to adopt safe, non-coercive and responsible sexual and reproductive behaviour and to use effective methods to prevent the transmission of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections;

30. *Stresses* the importance of ensuring that young men and women have access to information and education, including peer education and youth-specific HIV education, sexual education and services necessary for behavioural change, to enable them to develop the life skills required to reduce their vulnerability to HIV infection and reproductive ill health, in full partnership with young persons, parents, families, educators and health-care providers;

31. *Calls for* enhanced efforts by all relevant actors to include a gender perspective in the development of HIV and AIDS programmes and policies and in the training of personnel involved in implementing such programmes, including by focusing on the role of men and boys in addressing HIV and AIDS;

32. *Encourages* Governments and all other relevant actors to promote funding, both domestically and externally, and to support and expedite action-oriented research leading to affordable, safe and effective methods controlled by women to prevent HIV and other sexually transmitted infections, including microbicides and vaccines and research on strategies that empower women to protect themselves from sexually transmitted infections, including HIV, and methods of care, support and treatment for women of various ages, and to promote their involvement in all aspects of such research;

33. *Also encourages* Governments to increase the provision of resources and facilities to women who find themselves having to provide care and/or economic support for those infected with HIV or affected by the pandemic and to address the challenges faced by the survivors and caregivers, in particular children and older

persons, utilizing funds earmarked for care and support to reduce women's disproportionate burden of care, as well as to provide the balanced sharing of the provision of care by both men and women;

34. *Urges* Governments to continue to promote the participation and the significant contribution of people living with HIV, young people and civil society actors, in particular women's organizations, in addressing the problem of HIV and AIDS in all its aspects, including promoting a gender perspective, and to promote their full involvement and participation in the design, planning, implementation and evaluation of HIV and AIDS programmes, as well as in creating an enabling environment to combat stigmatization;

35. *Also urges* Governments to ensure that the dignity, rights and privacy of people living with HIV, in particular women and girls, are protected;

36. *Urges* Governments, the donor community and relevant entities of the United Nations system to prioritize programmes addressing the specific needs of women and girls in HIV response, to ensure resources to support the development of capacities of women's organizations for HIV and AIDS programme development and implementation, and to streamline funding procedures and requirements that will facilitate resource flows to community-level services;

37. *Also urges* Governments, the donor community and relevant entities of the United Nations system to ensure that gender equality implications are a key component of research, implementation and evaluation of new prevention methods and that such new prevention methods are part of a comprehensive approach to HIV prevention that protects and supports the rights of women and girls;

38. *Welcomes* the financial contributions made to date to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, urges further contributions to sustain the Fund, and calls upon all countries to encourage the private sector to contribute to the Fund;

39. *Stresses* the importance of building up national competence and capacity to provide an assessment of the drivers and impact of the epidemic, which should be used in planning for comprehensive HIV and AIDS prevention, treatment, care and support and for mitigating the impact of HIV and AIDS;

40. *Urges* the international community to complement and supplement, through increased international development assistance, efforts of the developing countries that commit increased national funds to fighting the HIV/AIDS pandemic, especially to address the needs of women and girls, in particular those countries most affected by HIV and AIDS, particularly in Africa, especially sub-Saharan Africa, and in the Caribbean, countries at high risk of expansion of the HIV and AIDS epidemic and countries in other affected regions whose resources for dealing with the epidemic are seriously limited;

41. *Recommends* also that, in the process of the review of the Millennium Development Goals, gender-equality perspectives should be included throughout the deliberations and that attention should be paid to the situation of women and girls infected or affected by HIV and AIDS.